

- Learn to tread lightly, do not leave reminders to others that you were there.
- Report illegal activities immediately.
- Respect landowners and their property. Offer them part of your bag/creel limit. Offer to help with chores, etc.
- Always get permission to go upon the lands and/or waters of another.
- Approach landowners at appropriate times and go back at some later point and thank them. Many landowners only hear from people when they want something from them.
- Leave gates as you find them, do not cut or tear down fences. Do not damage crops or property.
- Alert landowners about any problems you might find.
- Show consideration to others; treat them the way you would want to be treated. This includes anglers, boaters, and anyone else who might be in the area or who might visit the area in the future.
- Think of the "Future". Look at the big picture and emphasize the "Quality Outdoor Experience".
- Support wildlife and habitat conservation efforts.
- Pass on an "Ethical" tradition. What you do will set an example for others to follow.
- Strive to improve your outdoor skills and develop a deeper understanding of wildlife.
- Only participate with other ethical outdoorsman.

## TO REPORT WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS PHONE

**1-800-237-5712**

Or email: [wildcrime@dgif.state.va.us](mailto:wildcrime@dgif.state.va.us). For all other suspicious activities contact your local Sheriff's Department.



## VIRGINIA CHAPTER NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

The Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries shall afford to all persons an equal access to Department programs and facilities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sex or age. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, please write to: VA. Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, ATTN.: Compliance Officer, 4010 West Broad St. Richmond, VA 23230-1104

04/25/00

For more information or for information on forming a Wildlife Crime Watch contact your local Game Warden. Visit our Web site at:

**<http://www.dgif.state.va.us>**

**YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT THE VIRGINIA SPORTSMAN'S REWARD FUND, INC. BY SENDING YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS TO: VIRGINIA CRIME LINE, 4010 WEST BROAD STREET, RICHMOND, VA. 23230-1104**

## WILDLIFE CRIME WATCH

## ANGLING SPORTSMANSHIP



## A PARTNERSHIP FOR WILDLIFE, THE ENVIRONMENT, PROPERTY AND PEOPLE

# SPORTSMAN DEFINED

Webster's Dictionary defines **sportsman** as follows: **1.** A man active in sports. **2.** One who abides by the rules of a contest and accepts victory or defeat graciously. Webster's Dictionary defines **sportsmanship** as the qualities and conduct befitting a sportsman or sportswoman. **Angling or fishing** to most people today is a sport. There are not many people who make their living by being commercial fishermen. Commercial fishermen are those who harvest fish for sale in order to make a living. All sports have rules both written and unwritten. Generally the unwritten rules are referred to as **ethics**. Webster's Dictionary defines **ethic** as follows: **1.** A principle of right or good behavior. **2.** A system of moral principals or values.

## WHY IS SPORTSMANSHIP IMPORTANT

The world's population is continuing to expand and with this expansion comes more people wanting to pursue outdoor-related activities and also a decrease in areas where people can pursue these activities. In many areas, wildlife is suffering from the stress of loss/degrading of habitat. In addition there are a growing number of people who are opposed to hunting, trapping and fishing. Often outdoorsmen complain of the loss of previously opened private lands. This "loss" is most often associated with people who go afield and do not observe the laws and do not practice sportsmanship. Whenever anyone goes afield to fish, boat, hunt or whatever, they are representing all who enjoy the outdoors. It is the responsibility of each person to practice sportsmanship and set a positive example for other outdoorsmen and non-outdoorsmen.

Sportsmen and sportswomen of today need to re-examine what they are looking for and what they are expecting from their outdoor experience. The days of going afield with the sole purpose of harvesting game and fish should be gone. Instead the emphasis should be on enjoying the wonderful experience of enjoying their outdoor hobbies and the unique rewards that it offers. If we catch a fish we should enjoy that experience, not complain of the size or the lack of the numbers we catch. Others will learn from our examples. If we complain of our experience then others will be influenced to not be satisfied with their "complete" outdoor experience. We should "accept graciously" the outcome of our day/night afield. Look for a "quality" outdoor experience and you will never be disappointed.

The practice of "catch and release" has gained in popularity over the years as anglers learn they can enjoy their sport without harming the fish. The fish are released unharmed to live and grow and hopefully someone will again experience the "thrill" of catching that fish again. A fish is too valuable a resource to be caught only once.

## REASONS FOR WRITTEN RULES

Rules provide order and security. Rules pertaining to fishing are to protect fish, allow for re-population in order to have the various species for the future, protect the environment, protect landowner rights, and provide equal opportunity in a fair manner; fair to the wildlife/fish, environment and to other humans.

Seasons for harvesting wildlife are set due to the fact different species reproduce at different rates and have different survival rates. Seasons provide protection to those species that do not reproduce

as well and/or their survival rate is not as high as other species.

Creel limits are also necessary to protect certain species and allow them to reproduce. Creel limits also provide an avenue to level the playing field and provide an equal opportunity for everyone.

Size limits are necessary to protect certain species and allow them to reproduce. An example would be trout. The size limit in most areas for trout is seven inches. Research shows the Native trout of Virginia (Brook Trout) do not reproduce until they reach the length of five to six inches. With the limit set at seven inches this ensures the trout have the opportunity to reproduce before they are harvested.

Methods of taking wildlife are spelled out in order to protect the environment, the different species and allow for a sense of "fairness" to the wildlife.

Providing protection to landowners, through having to seek permission before going onto private land is important to the overall wildlife management effort. If the land is "Posted" with signs indicating "No trespassing, No hunting, No fishing" then written permission from the landowner is required to be carried by each person entering upon that property. If the property is not posted then oral permission is sufficient. Littering laws help protect the environment, wildlife and the landowner as well. It is incumbent on each person who utilizes the outdoors to protect the wildlife, the environment and to set a positive example to others. The old axiom of "Leave the area as you found it or better" is good advice to follow and to pass on to others.

## GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW

- Be safety conscious.
- Know and obey the laws.
- Respect the environment and wildlife.